



# **LINCOLN CHAFEE**

## **U.S. SENATOR**

### **RHODE ISLAND**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **SENATOR CHAFEE REQUESTS \$3 BILLION IN LIHEAP FUNDS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006**

**WASHINGTON, DC** – U.S. Senator Lincoln Chafee today joined a bipartisan group of Senators in writing a letter to Senate Committee on the Budget Chairman Judd Gregg and Ranking Member Kent Conrad, requesting \$3 billion to fund the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) as part of the fiscal year 2006 budget. Additionally, the Senators requested that the allocation provide for advance funding for fiscal year 2007 to pre-purchase fuel and start planning for the winter heating season in the spring and early summer.

“For many low-income families, disabled individuals, and senior citizens living on fixed incomes, home energy costs are unaffordable. These families often carry a higher energy burden than most Americans – spending up to 17 percent of their income on home energy bills. Each year, this burden grows as natural gas, heating oil, and propane prices continue to increase,” the letter explains.

“Energy is a basic need, and without LIHEAP assistance, low-income families and senior citizens face the impossible choice between paying their home energy bills or affording other basic necessities such as prescription drugs, housing and food,” it continues.

The request explains that with this amount of funding, LIHEAP will be able to provide adequate assistance to low-income families, senior citizens, and disabled individuals, helping them maintain economic stability. Additionally, with advance funding, states can plan to efficiently improve program management and act in a more fiscally responsible manner, conserving already limited resources. Advance funding will also ensure that states have the means necessary to provide timely assistance to low-income families who cannot afford to wait.

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